Next Meeting: Thursday, January 17, 7:30 p.m. at Frank Leimbach's apartment: 46 E. Cross, No. 2.

1980

depot town

CA-BOOSE(ke-boos'), n.(MD. *kabuys, kambuis,* earlier *kaban huis,* cabin house, ship's galley; see CABIN, CABARET),
1. a ship's galley or kitchen.
2. the trainmen's car on a freight train, usually at the rear.

DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION NOW OWNS CABOOSE

(That's the good news. Now the Bad news:)

Moving Problems Continue. . .

Over $3400 has been donated and pledged by supporters throughout the City and State to bring a 70-year old caboose to Depot Town. The Caboose will set at 300 Rice Street, at the West end of The Farmers' 'market island and will serve as DTA and Farmers' Market offices, community meeting space, mini-museum of the railroad industry and...everything else this creative community can invent. After installation, Conrail will remove the several spurs into the area, leaving only the track under the DTA Caboose, making what we hope will be the county's shortest railroad.

At its December 20th monthly meeting, the Association completed its contract with the previous owner and now has only to get it here. The caboose, which is 40 feet long, 8 feet wide, 13 feet high and weighs 22 tons awaits our attention in the Ford Motor Company railyard in Melvindale.

Such an antique no longer meets Conrails standards and DTA officials are now seeking a new plan for moving it -- to switch carriages with a newer car -- but liability coverage must be attained by the Association.

If this plan does not work, plan "C" is ready: local movers have volunteered their expertise and equipment to bring the Caboose here by highway. We've seen many packages of real estate trucked through Depot Town in the past few years, the next one may be our own.

CABOOSE CAMPAIGN HARD DATA

Formerly Grand Trunk Western Railway
Caboose Number 77134
Now designated number "Thirty-Nine"
Length 40'Width 8'Height 13'
Weight 22 tons
Age approx. 70 years
Cost of caboose $2500
First payment $500
Estimated moving and installation costs $2500
Total pledged to date $3400
Remainder to be raised by contributions $1600

(RESCUED BUILDINGS: The art of living in former schoolhouses, skating rinks, laundromats, fire stations, churches, barns, summer camps and cabooses. By Jacopetti, Van 'Meter and McCall. Capra Press, 1977, Santa Barbara.)
There was no doubt that this "counter culture" book with its beautiful interior and exterior shots would appeal to Depot Towners who have taken up residences in machine works, hotels, ballrooms, lofts and former cleaner's digs. But the section regarding spectacular "railroad rescues" will appeal even to DTA folk who live out in exurbia and travel here only for monthly meetings. That portion of the book titled "Trains and Such" includes residences in a train station, a parlor car, a caboose-couplet, a trolley and a wheel-less caboose mired down in Death Valley. Their comments about the problems attendant with moving the previously-moveable have great bearing upon Depot Town's most recent project:

"As trains continue to join Conestoga wagons and chariots in museums of outmoded vehicles, there'll be more opportunities to turn these wheeled behemoths into comfortable living spaces." Some, of course, were carefully built and furnished for that very purpose--recall the extravagant private railroad cars of last century, and the enduring caboose. Yet even a freight car has charm, and offers a spacious and well-insulated compartment, solidly built and high-roofed enough for sleeping lofts.

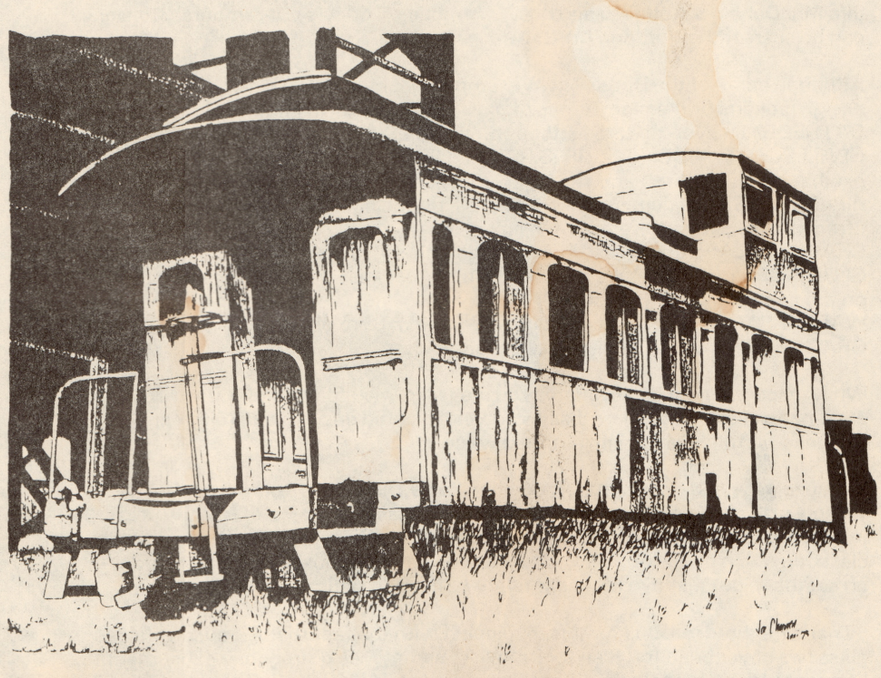
The logistics of securing one's very own railroad car are not always clear-cut and predictable. Some railroad companies sell old cars to the highest bidder, others sell them in large lots to scrap metal companies. If you can buy a car from your nearest railroad company, you may find a real bargain--they often charge as little as $1500. Salvage companies charge more--$3000-5000 for cabooses, boxcars and reefer cars, $5000-7500 for passenger and baggage cars.

Having purchased a car, you are faced with the problem of transporting it to its new home. If your car will still roll on tracks, it can make at least part of its journey as part of a train, at a cost of several hundred dollars to hook up, plus around a dollar a mile for the trip. But most old train cars are no longer trackworthy and must be transported entirely by truck. In some cases, this will mean THREE trucks--one for the car, one for the wheels, and one for the crane needed to take the car off the trucks and set in place. One rule of thumb I
ve heard is thirty dollars per vehicle per hour, portal-to-portal.

Problems of transport become compounded relative to both height and length of car being transported. Trucking companies must figure a route to your site that has no bridges too low for your car to pass under; ease of access at the delivery end has bearing, too--just how long will it take a truck driver and crane operator to ease the car onto its ideal location?

It may take a little wheeling and dealing, but the privilege of owning a piece of American history should more than offset the inconvenience."

DTA has left the "wheeling and dealing"up to John Waite. While he hustles for us, the rest of us can sit back and enjoy Jacopetti, Van Meter and McCall's delightful book: **RESCUED BUILDINGS.**



Neglected and forlorn, the old Quincy & Torch Lake passenger car-caboose sits near the inactive mine shaft at Houghton in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The drawing was done by Joseph Chmura. Depot Towners are determined to keep their caboose from becoming just another piece of nostalgia, but a useful and dynamic part of their community.

THROUGH A GLASS BRIGHTLY IN DEPOT TOWN

The recent installation of the **Alibi Bar's** spectacular new ''Oliver House'' stained glass signage has caused many Depot Towners to wonder at the ever-growing collection of residential and commercial glass in the district.

Just about everyone is familiar with Louis Tiffany's work in the 1890's ''Art Nouveau'' period, but little from those expensive commissions ever found its way to this middle-class neighborhood. Local experts claim Tiffany originals in the Highland Cemetery masoleum, the Ladies' Library/Sesquicentennial Hall (now in the collection of the Historical Museum) and the Presbyterian Church. With so many fake Tiffany lamps hanging in every class-C bar in the country, it is refreshing to know we have some of the ''real thing'' here in Ypsilanti.

Depot Town, however, had its share of not-so-fancy glass and, even though much of it was removed in the name of ''Modernization'' over the years, much of it is being uncovered, returned and appreciated again. Replacing that ''old fashioned'' glass was a quick way to look up-to-date, but now even good reproductions are helping us return to our more elegant past. Much of Depot Town's recent charm has been the fact that we did not lose most of our architectural roots, and our neighborhood glass easily reflects our history:

1860 - 1880

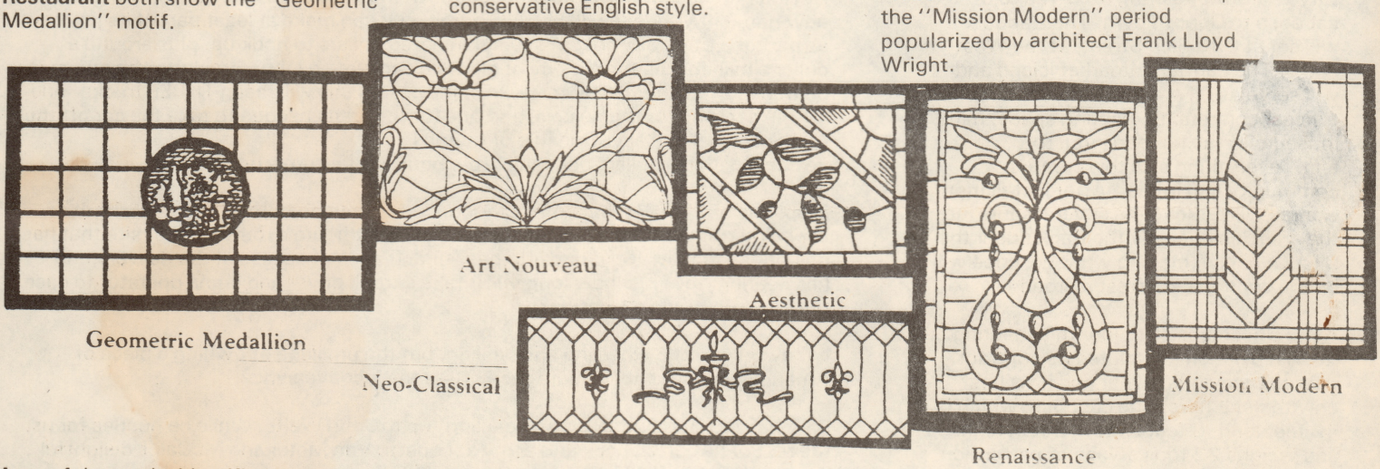
- The transform lights above the store windows at 17 E. Cross (Follett House) show rectangular panes of colored glass around a larger center pane with wooden mullions in a ''Queen Anne'' style also popular in many foyers and entrys in the nearby East Side neighborhood. A short walk will reveal many relatives within minutes of Depot Town.
- The centerpeice above the **Alibi's** bar and the entry piece at the **Old Town Restaurant** both show the ''Geometric Medallion'' motif.

1880 - 1900

- **Old Town's** transom light and the new **Alibi** exterior sign reflect the ''Renaissance Style,'' with its roots in French design. **Sidetrack's** transom light is of the same period, but in a ''ribbon design'' soon to be flanked by more transom designs across the facade.
- Kathy Sorenson-Helzerman's ''**Shear Genius**'' barbershop sign most nearly repeats the ''Aesthetic'' or ''Eastlake'' style which was a considerably more conservative English style.

1900 - 1920

- The **Alibi's** mirrors are of the ''Neo-Classical'' style (a neat tick: wash those old windows well, then back them with inexpensive mirrors to accent the beveled edges).
- Your DTA FLYER typist looks through more ''Neo-Classical'' examples which are being used for storm windows on the third floor of 50 E. Cross while typing this copy.
- Riber Art Works exhibits an example of the ''Mission Modern'' period popularized by architect Frank Lloyd Wright.



Many of the works identified here are reproductions done by Frank Leimbach of **Period Glass** and reclaimed originals are always to be found at the **Depot Exchange Jim MacDonald's Antiques** and **J.C.T. Antiques.** Today's contemporary designs can be seen at the **Heritage Art Gallery** in Old Town Hall.

Although some of the Depot Town examples are hybrids of period, style and design, several of the many types of glass you can identify are:
CATHEDRAL - even textured although ''hammered,'' and generally soft of tone
OPALESCENT - MUCH COLOR IS REFLECTED OFF THE GLASS: when back-lit, it exhibits an inner ''fire'' and shows swirls of several colors
RIPPLE GLASS has numerous varieties, all producing a very wavy appearance and often streaked with more then one color
CRACKLE GLASS appears to be shattered; it is very rough to the touch
GLUE CHIP GLASS is almost always ''white'' or clear; it looks like frost has settled on the pane
WAFFLE-BACK GLASS has a strong, indented pattern on one side
GRANITE BACK GLASS has a very pebbly texture.

While inspecting our local variety, you may also wish to watch for the many exciting forms of decorative inserts: jewels, painted designs and rough-cut ''chunks,'' stones, and even petrified wood.

In a special supplement of the November 1979 **Old-House Journal,** H.Weber Wilson states, ''American residential stained glass represents one of the great ironies in the history of art: its beauty has been amply appreciated by the middle class for which it was originally created. Yet simultaneously, it has been branded an aesthetic outcast byp ractically every writer and critic of the past 75 years.''

''There are three reasons for this, beginning with the fact that American stained glass has never been forgiven for its lavish, sometimes outrageous experiments that went far beyond the traditional, medieval style church windows.''''Second, residential stained glass has always been considered simply a decorative building component, unable to attain its own artistic reputation outside the shabby treatment given the whole spectrum of Victorian architecture.'' ''The third reason that secular stained glass has gone unnoticed is that during its halcyon days the industry itself was so rife with dissension that no one bothered to make a record of what was being created, and why.''

Perhaps this introduction to Depot Town's glass can be an ''EYE—OPENER TO THE PLEASURES OF VIEWING DECORATIVE WINDOWS.''

Old Town
RESTAURANT
36 E. Cross, Depot Town

EVERY HAPPINESS
IN THE
NEW YEAR

THANKS TO OUR DEPOT TOWN ADVERTISERS...

For two years we published this little rag out of our meager dues money and it cost us $30 a month to print 200 copies. Now we include ads for our local business community and make nearly $50 a month profit* with 500 copies in circulation. Look out, **Ypsilanti Press,** we're taking over!

*Don't worry about calling it profit; IRS studies our books carefully and it's all gone by the end of the year, spent on Association projects.

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